

What is Claimed is:

Sub 1

1. A system for transmitting billing information to a communication device, comprising:
receiving means operatively associated with a communication device for receiving data transmitted via a electromagnetic waves; and
a remote access unit having a memory configured to store user identification data and a low-power transmitter adapted to transmit the user identification data to the receiving means, the remote access unit further having a manually-operated transmit button and a controller, responsive to the transmit button, to controllably retrieve user identification data from the memory and transmit the user identification data from the low-power transmitter.

2. The system as defined in claim 1, wherein the user identification data includes an financial account number.

3. The system as defined in claim 1, wherein the user identification data includes a long distancing billing account number.

4. The system as defined in claim 1, wherein the receiving means receives electromagnetic data in a wavelength selected from the group consisting of:

radio frequency;
ultrasonic; and

infra-red.

5. The system as defined in claim 1, wherein electronic circuitry that carries out the functionality of the remote access unit is contained within a single integrated circuit.

6. The system as defined in claim 1, wherein the remote access unit includes means for formatting the user identification data into a data packet for transmission to the receiving means.

7. The system as defined in claim 1, wherein the remote access unit further includes a second transmit button.

8. The system as defined in claim 1, wherein the communication device is one selected from the group consisting of: a telephone, a modem, an ISDN converter, and a cable box.

9. A method for transmitting information to a communication device comprising the steps of:
depressing a manually-operative transmit button of a remote-access unit.

retrieving predefined user identification information from an internal memory of the remote access unit;

formatting the retrieved user identification information into a predefined signal for transmission;

transmitting a low-power electromagnetic signal including the formatted user identification information;

receiving the transmitted electromagnetic signal at the communication device;

extracting the user information contained within the transmitted signal; and

transmitting the extracted information over the telephone line for authorization.

9. The method as defined in claim 8, further including the step of authorizing use of the communication device, based upon information obtained received in response to the step of transmitting the extracted information for authorization.

10. The method as defined in claim 8, wherein the step of transmitting a low-power electromagnetic signal includes transmitting a low-power radio frequency signal.

11. A system for providing remote access to a communication device, comprising:

a communication device;

a receiver associated with the communication device and configured to receive data transmitted via a electromagnetic waves;

a remote access unit having a memory configured to store user identification data and a low-power transmitter adapted to transmit the user identification data to the receiving means, the remote access unit further having a manually-operated transmit button and a controller responsive to the transmit button to controllably retrieve user identification data from the memory and transmit the user identification data from the low-power transmitter.

12. The system as defined in claim 11, wherein the communication device includes a magnetic card reader.

13. A computer readable storage medium containing program code for controlling the operation of a system for transmitting billing information to a communication device comprising:

a communication device;

receiving means for receiving data transmitted via a electromagnetic waves;

a remote access unit having a memory configured to store user identification data and a low-power transmitter adapted to transmit the user identification data to the receiving means, the remote access unit further having a manually-operated

transmit button and a controller, responsive to the transmit button, to controllably retrieve user identification data from the memory and transmit the user identification data from the low-power transmitter.

14. A computer readable storage medium containing program code for transmitting user identification information to a communication device comprising the steps of:

depressing a manually-operative transmit button of a remote-access unit.

retrieving predefined user identification information from an internal memory of the remote access unit.

formatting the retrieved user identification information into a predefined signal for transmission;

transmitting a low-power electromagnetic signal including the formatted user identification information;

receiving the transmitted electromagnetic signal at the communication device;

extracting the user information contained within the transmitted signal; and

transmitting the extracted information over the communication device line for authorization.